

DART Commission Agenda

Municipal Service Center

Thursday, March 27, 2014

11:30 am

1. Approval of minutes from May 2013 meeting
2. Char Williams has agreed to another term on the DART Commission.
3. Introduction of Amy Dooley, DART Supervisor
4. Karen Murphy- DART designation as Small Urban and funding changes
5. DART driver training: Engaging the Customer – Are You Road Ready?
6. Training for staffing agencies that provide service to our passengers
7. New Policy Considerations:
 - A. Cancellation Policy
 - B. Charging no show fees for family members
 - C. No Show
8. 2015 ADA Vehicle Accessibility Plan & Approval
9. Public comment
10. Other

A. Cancellation of standing orders:

- Dial-A-Ride's current cancellation policy requires a 60 minute cancellation notice prior to the scheduled pickup time without any penalty to the rider (Monday – Friday 6:00 am – 5:00 pm/Saturday 9:00 am – 1 pm).
- Rides scheduled after 5:00 pm (Monday – Friday) must be cancelled by 5:00 pm or are considered a no show and the rider pays a no show fee equal to appropriate one-way fare.
- Rides scheduled after 1:00 pm on Saturday must be cancelled by 1:00 pm or are considered a no show and the rider pays a no show fee equal to appropriate one-way fare. Reduced fare riders pay a reduced fare. Regular fare riders pay the regular fare.
- If a rider cancels a ride (Monday – Friday 6:00 am – 5:00 pm) less than 60 minutes prior to pick up time the passenger is charged a no show fee equal to the appropriate one-way fare. Reduced fare riders pay a reduced fare. Regular fare riders pay the regular fare.

Current Issue:

1. Some passengers are using Dial-A-Ride as backup transportation. They book rides and then seek alternate transportation and cancel rides on a regular (sometimes daily) basis when they find alternate transportation.
2. Some passengers even have standing orders that are cancelled on a regular basis when they find another ride.

Dial-Ride currently schedules approximately 380 – 450 rides per day Monday - Friday. On average 60 rides per day are cancelled.

Question:

1. Is the current policy allowing one hour cancellation appropriate?
2. For riders with standing orders what percentage of time should they be allowed to cancel their ride and still keep their standing order?

C. No Show Fee Charge Within a Family

- Currently if Dial-A-Ride has two riders that are not related to each other that schedule rides together, no show the scheduled ride, they both pay a no show fee.
- If we have two family members that schedule rides together and no show we only charge one no show fee. Examples:

Example #1: Mom and three children going shopping. The Mom no shows the ride we are charging just one no show fee.

Example #2: Two children going from home to school. Both children no show the ride we are charging just one no show fee.

Example #3: Two friends book a ride from the Mall to the Library. The two friends no show the ride we are charging them both a no show fee.

Question:

1. Is it appropriate to charge a family for multiple no shows for a single ride?

C. No Show Background Information

With new technology Dial-A-Ride is better able to track cancellations and no shows for our passengers. This technology has brought to our attention that Dial-A-Ride has some riders who have a high occurrence of no shows. These riders have paid the no show fee equal to the one way fare associated with these rides (\$.75 reduced fare or \$2.00 full fare). With the current average cost per ride at \$16.00, no shows are costly to Dial-A-Ride.

In researching other transit agencies in our region, most agencies did not have a policy regarding excessive no shows. A passenger could no show many times and as long as the passenger paid the no show fee (equal to a one way fare) there was no other consequence. If the passenger did not pay the no show fee they were not allowed to ride until the fee was paid. The City of Alma was the only transit agency that we found from the agencies solicited that had a policy. Attached is a listing of the agencies contacted and their policies.

Some of the problem for DART is that Community Mental Health and other agencies give out tickets to our passengers. Last year CMH purchased 28,000 tickets. With the tickets being given to passengers there doesn't seem to be accountability for the no shows.

Question: Should the City of Midland implement a more stringent no show policy for riders with excessive no shows.

City of Midland Current Policy

Currently, the City of Midland has been operating with the following no show policy:

- Rides must be cancelled at least 60 minutes prior to the pickup time or it is considered a no show.
- Evening rides scheduled after 5:00 pm must be cancelled by 5:00 pm or are considered a no show.
- Saturday rides must be cancelled by 1:00 pm or are considered a no show.
- Morning rides prior to 8:30 am may be cancelled by leaving a message on the DART afterhours answering machine at least 60 minutes prior to pick up time.
- DART will cancel the return ride if the passenger no shows the ride going.
- Passengers are required to pay the no show fee equal to their one-way fare with their next scheduled ride.
- DART will cancel a standing order if the rider no shows three times **in a row** and allow the rider to book rides the day prior to service. **This has not been**

implemented consistently. Booking a ride the day before service severely limits the availability of our service to a passenger, including the strong possibility that we are already booked for that time slot.

We have given a 15 - 30 day suspension to a couple of passengers who lost standing order privileges and continued to no show even when booking rides on the one day at a time basis.

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There are several ways to discourage individuals that excessively no show the DART System. Some ideas include:

- Limit the rider to booking rides one day at a time
- Limit the passenger to booking one-way rides
- Suspension from service
- Paying the full cost of the ride after a certain number of no shows – similar to the City of Alma's policy.
- Paying double fare for a no show – not sure this is impactful when the tickets are given to many of our riders at no charge
- Paying for no shows in cash – This could be difficult to implement
- Cancellation of standing orders based on the number of no shows over a period of time (30 days)

Below is a possible policy that combines several of the above ideas:

When a customer requests transportation and then fails to show for a pick-up or cancels the ride with less than 60 minutes' notice it is called a no-show. All evening rides cancelled after 5:00 pm are also considered a no-show. Customers may have scheduled a single ride or have a standing order. When someone is a no-show it is costly for the Dial-A-Ride service. In an effort to reduce the number of no-shows, the City of Midland Dial-A-Ride has developed the following policy:

- If a customer no-shows a ride, their return ride will automatically be cancelled.
- If a customer no-shows they will be required to pay the fare for the no-show with their next ride.
- If a customer accumulates three no-shows in a 30 day period, service will be suspended until the rider pays the full cost of the third no-show ride which is \$16.00, before service will be reinstated. In addition:
 - All standing orders for the rider will be cancelled.

- The rider will be able to continue to use the service with the understanding that they can schedule rides one day at a time, by calling the day prior to when service is needed.
- The rider will be unable to schedule any standing orders for a period of 3 months and the approval of the DART supervisor.

If during the next 12 months the rider accumulates three additional no shows in **another** 30-day period, service will be suspended for 30-days and the rider must pay the full cost of the third no-show ride which is \$16.00, before service will be reinstated. In addition:

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- After the 30 day suspension the rider will be able to continue to use the service with the understanding that they can schedule one-way rides, by calling the day prior to when service is needed to schedule the ride to their destination and then calling once they reach their destination for a return ride.
- The rider will not be allowed to schedule any standing orders for a period of 6 months and the approval of the DART supervisor.

If during the same 12 months period the rider accumulates three additional no shows in another 30-day period, service may be discontinued at the discretion of the DART supervisor.

No Show Policy – Other Local Transit Agencies

Gladwin –

No formal policy. Gladwin will discontinue standing orders if a person no shows a standing order 3 times. At that point the passenger has to call the day of service to book ride. Note: Booking same day booking of rides is easily accommodated with Gladwin Transit. If someone continues to no show they would consider a suspension. They have not suspended anyone for excessive no shows.

Fare: Adult Fare \$3.00 / Seniors and Persons with a Disability \$1.50

Mt. Pleasant –

Prior to the implementation of PC Trans they had no way to track no shows. With the new PC Trans system they are currently not proficient enough to track no shows and payments. If they do try to collect no shows they have to be paid in cash.

Fare: Adult Fare \$2.00 / Seniors and Persons with a Disability \$1.00

County Connection –

Charges \$3.00 cash for all no shows. As long as a person continues to pay their no shows they can continue to use the system without any limitations or penalties.

Fare: Adult Fare \$3.00 / Seniors and Persons with a Disability \$2.50

Clinton County –

Passenger has to pay two fares for any no show.

Fare: Adult Fare \$2.00 / Seniors and Persons with a Disability \$1.00

City of Alma -

The City of Alma claims to have reduced their no show rate by 75% since they implemented the following policy:

For "call-in" no-shows (including Gold Card patrons) the passenger will be required to **pay a penalty fare for any no-shows exceeding one**. This penalty fare will be required to be paid at the next request of service when the bus arrives. **Should there continue to be no-shows, exceeding three (3), the customer will be required to pay the full cost of service.** (At the time of this updated policy that amount is \$13.00.) No service will be provided if the penalty fare is not paid. A regular standing order customer (including Gold Card patrons for "call-in" no-shows including Gold Card patrons) the passenger will be required to **pay a penalty fare for any no-shows exceeding one**. This penalty fare will be required to be paid at the next request of service when the bus arrives. **Should there continue to be no-shows, exceeding three (3), the** DART Commission Meeting
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customer will be required to pay the full cost of service. (At the time of this updated policy that amount is \$13.00.) No service will be provided if the penalty fare is not paid.

A Regular standing order customer (including Gold Card patrons) will have their **standing order discontinued after three no-shows**. The customer will be required to telephone ahead for service (call-in) for a determined period of time. The passenger will be required to **pay a penalty fare for any no-shows exceeding one**. This penalty fare will be required to be paid when the bus arrives for the next service. Should there continue to be no-shows, **exceeding three (3), the standing order card will be removed from service and the customer will be required to pay the full cost of service.** (At the time of this updated policy that amount is \$13.00.) No service will be provided if the penalty fare is not paid.

When the Transit Supervisor, or his alternative is satisfied with the quality that the customer(s) has been riding without having any no-shows, the standing order may be reinstated

A Pre-paid standing order customer will have the **first three (3) no-shows deducted from the prepaid card**. Should there continue to be no-shows, **exceeding three (3), the standing order card will be removed** from service and the customer will be reimbursed any remaining prepaid fares with DART tickets. The customer will be required to **pay the full cost of service**. (At the time of this updated policy that amount is \$13.00.) No service will be provided if the penalty fare is not paid.

If a Pass standing order customer has more than **one (1) no show they must pay the regular fare upon request of the next service when the bus arrives**. Should there continue to be no-shows, **exceeding three (3), the customer will be required to pay the full cost of service**. (At the time of this updated policy that amount is \$13.00.) No service will be provided if the penalty fare is not paid. **Upon the third (3) no show the card will be removed from service** and a review performed on the account of the amount of rides used. The rate calculated will be at the full fare value. That amount will be deducted from the price paid for the Pass. If there is a balance remaining it will be paid with DART tickets. If there is not a balance remaining the account will be considered closed.

If any of the no-shows as identified above become excessive, notification will be attempted of the problem and alternative measures may be necessary. Although it is a rare occasion when it is necessary to terminate service for a customer for having an excessive amount of no-shows, this is an alternative measure that may be taken. The Transit Director or his alternative will make such measures.

Fare: Adult fare prior to 5 pm \$2.00 / Seniors and Persons with a Disability \$1.00

Adult fare after 5 pm \$4.00 / Seniors and Persons with a Disability \$2.00